DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 226 177 CE 035 034

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TITLE Older Adult Participation in Higher Education. New Roles for Older Arkansans as Students and Educational Resources.
INSTITUTION Arkansas Community Foundation, Little Rock.; Arkansas Univ., Little Rock.
PUB DATE Jan 82
NOTE 37p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Ancillary School Services; Educational Research; *Higher Education; *Interests; *Middle Aged Adults; *Older Adults; Participant Characteristics; *Participation; *Student Educational Objectives; Student Interests; Surveys
IDENTIFIERS *Arkansas (Pulaski County)

ABSTRACT

A random sample survey of people aged 50 and older was conducted to study the educational interests of older residents of Pulaski County, Arkansas. Telephone surveys were completed for 346 individuals. Findings showed that almost 85 percent of the respondents indicated an interest in education. Two-thirds of the respondents were women; 62 percent were married, the majority were white (82 percent); more than 58 percent had incomes ranging between $5,000 and $30,000; and, 26 percent were currently or recently involved in an educational program. The most common educational goals were personal growth and development, leisure time and hobby interests, and meeting interesting people. Areas of interest were pre-retirement planning, recreation and exercise, philosophy and religion, business, horticulture, and work-related skills. Preferred learning locations were churches or community centers, colleges, and senior citizen centers. A majority preferred weekday courses; 45 percent preferred morning programs. Barriers to participation were lack of interest, physical limitations, not enough time, and isolation. Need was indicated for these support services: transportation, career counseling, and financial aid. Over 34 percent expressed interest in teaching others. Recommendations were made for Arkansas postsecondary educational institutions to become more responsive to educational needs of older adults. (An annotated bibliography and the survey are appended.) (YLB)

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OLDER ADULT PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

NEW ROLES FOR OLDER ARKANSANS AS STUDENTS AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

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January, 1982

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Little Rock, Arkansas 72204

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the project staff of the Educational Interest Survey of Older Adults, we wish to express sincere gratitude to Dr. Howard Stephens, Director of the Division of Continuing Education at UALR; Mr. Robert I. Lewis, II, Director of Management Systems and Planning at the University; and Ms. Norma Wisor, Director of the Arkansas Community Foundation for their administrative expertise and support for this timely and important research study.

Needless to say, much appreciation is also due to the 13 telephone surveyors who completed 346 telephone interviews: Debra Gibson, Ruth Harvey, Teri Jefferies, Kathy Kohl, Jeanne Landes, Linda Lipsey, Maudie McDowell, Paul Norman, Carrye Rudd, Donna Talley, B. J. Taylor, Ellen Wilkerson, and Peter Zolik.

Also the project could not have been completed without the aid of UALR's Computer Center; Dr. Perry Thompson and Dr. M. D. Buffalo, editors of the final draft; and UALR's Duplicating Center. These individuals are all very professional in their work and are worthy of the deep respect the project staff affords them.

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INTRODUCTION

In the postsecondary educational system of the United States, the adult student is treated like an educational stepchild; older adults, particularly are stigmatized by the unhealthy cliche, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." Our society, its institutions and many older people believe that old people do not and cannot learn.

In early 1981 the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and the Arkansas Community Foundation planned a random sample survey of people 50 and older. The purpose of the study was to try and better understand the educational interests of older Pulaski County residents. Our interest in the subject of education and senior citizens grew out of a desire to confirm or refute social concepts of older people and learning: e.g., Can older people learn and do they want to learn? In addition to the Foundation staff, the divisions at UALR which helped to create the survey instrument and perform data analysis include: Continuing Education; Institutional Studies; and Sociology, Anthropology and Gerontology.

The objectives of the survey were to: (1) describe the characteristics of the respondents, their educational goals and perceived barriers to participation; (2) determine the degree of interest in specific educational opportunities; (3) determine what support services would facilitate their ability to take advantage of educational opportunities; and (4) provide suggestions for educational policy and program changes on the basis of the data provided.

OVERVIEW

Problem Statement

As the postsecondary traditional youth market of 18 to 24 year olds declines -- and the decline has been significant in the last 10 years -- the educational system will have to make changes in order to both accommodate the growing older population and to maintain financial stability. According to the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges,

> "By 1970, the numbers of traditional students were no longer on the increase. It became obvious to some institutions that in order to exist they were going to have to recruit nontraditional students."
> (Gilder, 1979)

The problem is how to adjust a system which has been geared toward a youth population to a system that pays equal attention to the needs of the new student market: the older adult.

The Information Gap

Perhaps the most significant problem with adult education in Arkansas is the lack of valid statistical data regarding the specific educational interests of older residents. Although national pollsters, such as Louis Harris, have documented the high interest in educational programs among Americans 65 and older, it is not easy to apply these statistics to the unique socioeconomic environment of Arkansas. Formal education and income levels of the state's older population are lower than the national average. Arkansas is also a rural state with a significant number of older people scattered and isolated throughout small towns and farming communities. The most unique quality of the state, setting Arkansas apart from most of the nation, is the fact that 18.5 percent of the state's population is composed of people 60 and older; only Florida has a higher percentage of senior citizens. The information gap is further widened when residents of Arkansas between the ages of 50 and 60 are included.

Lack of sufficient information has created problems for both postsecondary administrators and for older Arkansans. For state institutions, officials face the problem of validating the demand and identifying the market for new courses specially oriented toward older students. The lack of accessibility to educational resources and alternatives and the lack of information has resulted in older people interested in educational options and services not addressing, as a single voice, the issue.

Demographic Changes

In approximately 35 years, people 60 and older will compose 25 percent of the total American population, meaning that there will be more people in this age group than there will be in the age group 18 to 24. This single demographic fact has profound implications for our society and its institutions. The growth in this population can be primarily attributed to three major factors:

(1) Those individuals born between 1945 and 1963, the "baby boom" period, will begin to turn 50 in 1995;

(2) Birth rates have decreased significantly. Presently, the average U.S. family has less than two children per household; and

(3) Life expectancy in the U.S. continues to increase.

As the graying of America continues, the older adult will be better educated and there is a greater likelihood that he will pursue educational interests in his free time during later years. As advocated in POLICIES IN LIFELONG EDUCATION,

> "We have discovered that, although the number of 18-year-olds has declined, the number of adults in this country who genuinely wish to and are capable of taking part in a program of lifelong learning has made the ultimate size of the postsecondary operation enormous in the United States."
>
> (Gilder, 1979)

In spite of this increase brought on by older adult students, there are still colleges and universities that do not provide adequate educational resources or facilities. The text continues to say,

> "Adults are asked to pay taxes, support school systems, and are welcomed into adult programs that offer financial assistance equal to traditional students. They are expected to be grateful for being allowed to return to college at all, and they are advised they shouldn't demand such high priorities as equal access to full educational opportunities."

Seniors as resources

Older people are not only a source to be tapped as a new student market; they are an important resource that universities and colleges can utilize as resource persons, teachers, and consultants. (Reissmon, 1977) In 1976 more than 40,000 Americans 65 and older were volunteers in education and more "could be recruited for education based on the number of older people who said they would be interested in volunteering, if asked." (Reissmon, 1977)

Policy analysts and postsecondary administrators need to ask themselves: In what ways can the skills, experience and wisdom be tapped from older people to the advantage of postsecondary education? How can older Americans be producers of educational services rather than just consumers?

Review of Literature

An annotated bibliography related to older students and lifelong education is included as Appendix A. Most of the literature confirms the fact of shifting demographics and the increasing population of senior citizens and performance of older students in learning. As the narratives indicate, the traditional student market is declining and a new student market -- i.e., older adults -- is growing. The fact that older people have educational needs and can learn what is necessary in order to fulfill those needs is also acknowledged. Evidence of successful senior educational programs nationwide are noted and are useful in encouraging other postsecondary institutions to follow these models or similar courses of action.

SURVEY DESIGN AND EXECUTION

To obtain a representative sample of the 50 and over age group in Pulaski County, a systematic sample with a random start was chosen from the Little Rock/North Little Rock and Suburban Areas Telephone Directory of 1981. The first name chosen was determined by use of a table of random numbers. Using a predetermined interval of 30 -- adequate to draw an initial sample of 4000 -- every resident telephone number with a Pulaski County prefix was included in the sample.

The survey instruments were to be completed by means of telephone interviewing. For validation of the survey responses, interviewers were instructed to ask for an individual who was 50 years of age or older at each residency where contact was made. If no one at the residency was a member of the survey population, the interviewer thanked the contactee for his time and advanced to the next telephone number. On the other hand if an appropriate person was a member of the household, an interview was attempted.

The telephone calls, made from May 12, 1981 through July 16, 1981, were generally made from the interviewers' homes during the hours of 4:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. and rendered 346 completed survey instruments. The completed number of surveys produced a sampling error of 4 percent at a 95 percent confidence level.

GENERAL FINDINGS

A Descriptive Sketch of the Survey Respondents

Since Louis Harris and other national pollsters have rated senior citizens' interest in education at greater than 50 percent, it should not be surprising that the Educational Interest Survey reflected that over 50 percent of the respondents in Pulaski County were interested in some form of educational endeavor. However, it is surprising that 82.9 percent indicated an interest. Of the 17.1 percent that were not interested in education, only eleven respondents gave "too old" as a primary reason for no interest. This is an interesting result which could imply that either people in their later years have confidence in their ability to learn and continuing to learn or that being old is not a good reason for nonparticipation in educational programs.

Other key demographic factors for those surveyed include the following characteristics. Note that each is mentioned as a key factor and percentages will not always equal 100 percent.

1. A two to one ratio of women to men occurred. This could mean that more women than men were at home during the time most survey calls were made. Of those surveyed, the largest employment category was domestic engineers -- i.e., homemakers -- (8.1%). Other employment categories with large responses include: sales (8.1%); teachers (6.4%); and secretaries (5.2%). Of those surveyed, 53% were not employed, 38% were retired, and 7% were looking for work. There were 36.4% of the respondents in part time jobs, suggesting that older adults prefer part time work over full time work or that they cannot get a full time job.

2. There were 62% who stated they were married and 24% widowed.

3. The age distribution of the respondents follow: 25% were 50-55 years of age; 24% were between the ages of 56 and 60; 19% were 61-65 years old; 15% were 66 to 70; and 17% were 71 years of age or older.

4. Whites composed the majority of the survey respondents (82%); 16% were black and 2%, other.

5. More than 58% of the respondents had incomes that ranged between $5,000 and $30,000 annually, with 20% responding that they had incomes above $30,000 and 12% with yearly incomes below $5,000.

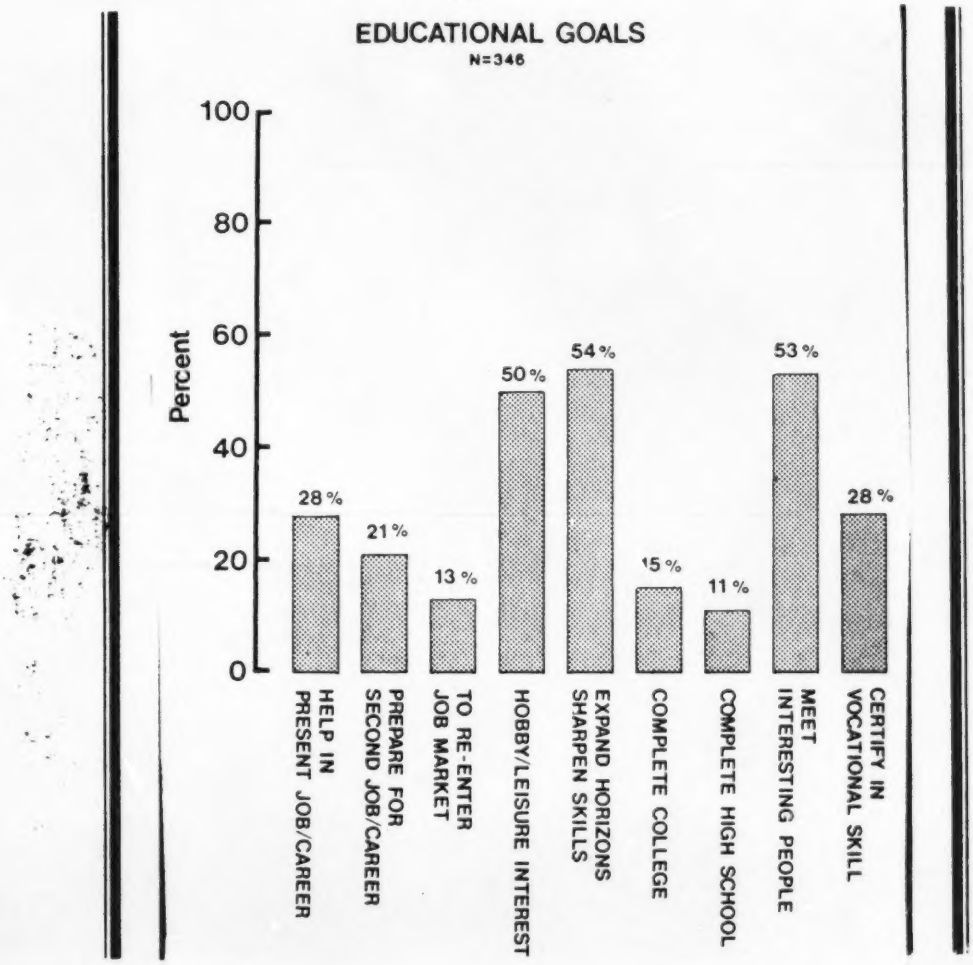
6. The educational levels of the respondents varied widely: 21.4% had completed high school; 8.1% had completed college; 22.3% had some college education; 6.4% had graduate or professional degrees, while 15.3% had some high school education.

7. Exactly 26% of those surveyed were currently or recently involved in an educational program, 4.4% taking college classes. Further, 55.8% stated they were participating in various leisure activities ranging from fishing to reading. A positive note was reflected by the respondents on behalf of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock; over 75% of those surveyed knew that UALR provided adult education classes.

Goals in Education

When constructing the survey instrument, two questions on goals were included to validate the respondents's answers. Collectively, the questions asked whether or not nine categories represented their own educational goals: academic credit leading to high school, undergraduate or graduate degrees; vocational certification; academic credit to sharpen skills (with no degree); personal growth and development; to help in present job; to prepare for a second career; and to re-enter the job market. GRAPH I below indicates responses to both questions and the nine categories. Three categories--personal growth and development, leisure time and hobby interests and meeting interesting people--were the areas drawing the largest responses.

GRAPH I

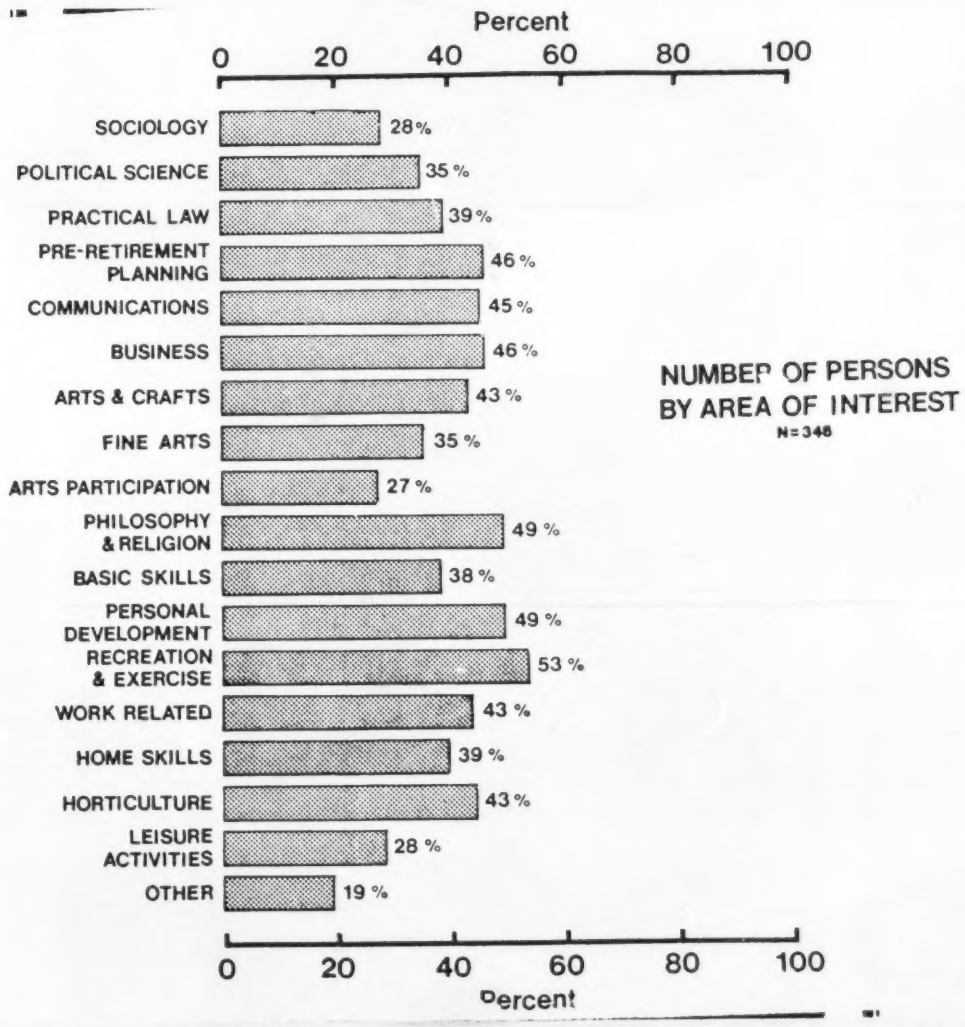


It is interesting to note that there is only a small percentage of older adults looking for a degree, whether it be a high school, college or graduate degree; although the percent interested in degrees may have risen in recent years. Without comparable statistics, it is difficult to ascertain changes. Since the essence of any educational process is to expand knowledge and horizons, the high percent interested in the personal growth and development category is not surprising. Another area drawing a large response was certification leading to a particular vocational skill (27.7%).

Areas of Interest

The survey listed seventeen education subject categories (GRAPH II); and when surveyed respondents gave a wide selection of interests. Pre-retirement planning and recreation and exercise were preferred by a large number of older adults (46% and 52.6% respectively). However, other categories drew large responses, such as Philosophy and Religion (49.4%), Business (46.2%), Horticulture (43.4%) and Work-Related Skills (43%).

GRAPH II



When the respondents were asked to list any additional areas of interest, more than 41 new categories were volunteered by 18.7%. The following list is an example of the different subject areas of interest volunteered by respondents:

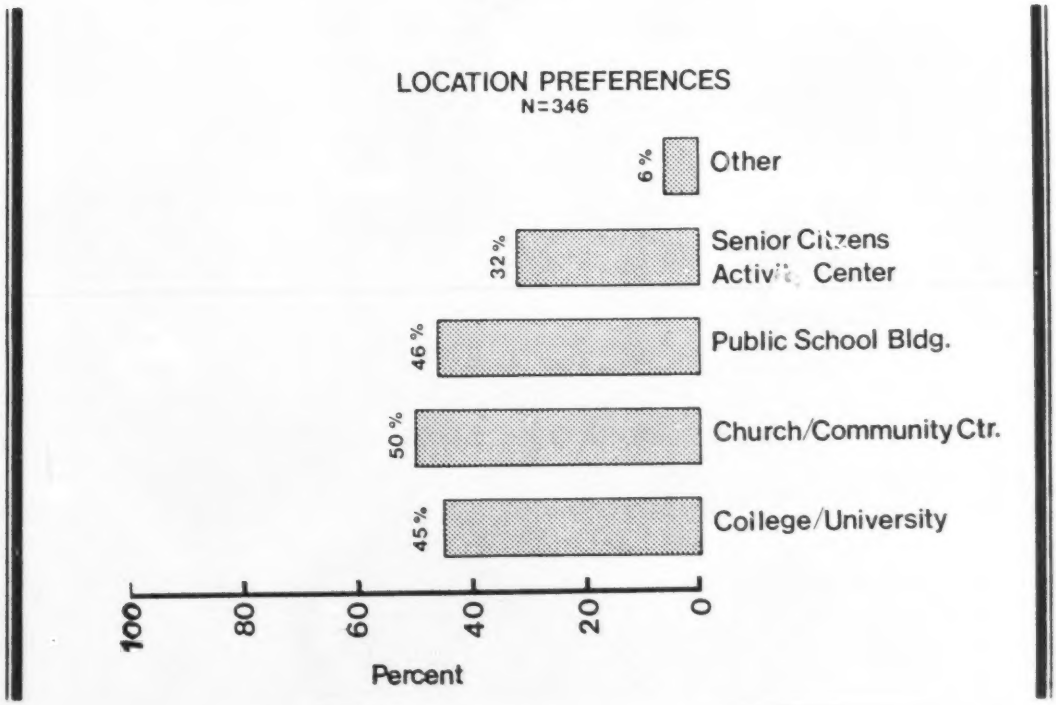
Foreign Languages	Quality Control
Sign Language	Sewing
Stained Glasswork	Income Tax Tips
Management	Psychology
Music	Geography
Electronics	Grammar
Life Insurance	Estate Planning
Carpentry	Nursing

Manifest through the subject areas listed above and those provided in the survey is the idea that older people in Pulaski County would prefer le- ning about as many different areas as do younger students. The specific categories volunteered suggest that perhaps older people have more specific ideas what they want to learn than do younger people.

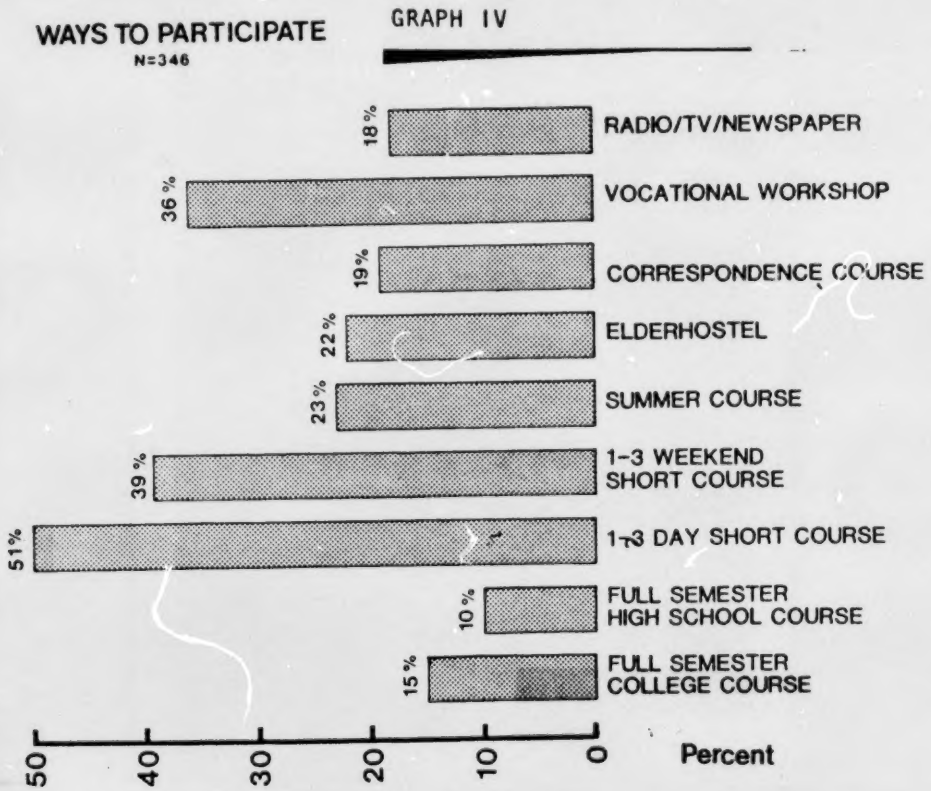
Preferences for Location and Participation

The telephone surveyors listed four locations for respondents to choose from to determine where they prefer to learn and participate. More than 55% indicated that the location was an important factor with 50% preferring church or community center locations. Approximately 45% would participate in a college setting and 32% stated senior citizen centers as a preferred choice. The respondents also volunteered other locations of preference, including trade schools, libraries, police stations and rural centers. (NOTE: GRAPH III on location preference.)

GRAPH III



A majority of older adults (60%) are interested in taking weekday courses (as opposed to the weekend) and 45% prefer programs held during the morning, as indicated by the following graph.



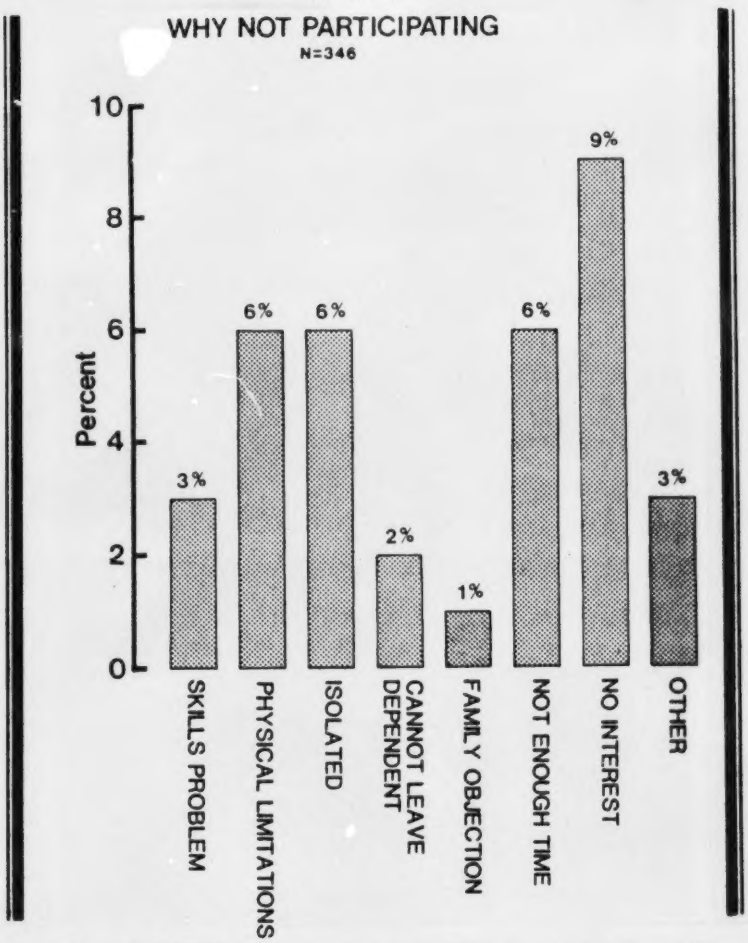
When older adults were given different choices for ways to participate, over 50% preferred programs lasting one to three days. Weekend workshops, summer courses and **Elderhostel** (a national on-campus program for people 60+) were the other forms of participation frequently chosen.

Concerning classroom composition, 52% believe the age of fellow students is not an important consideration; but respondents did think it important to have classmates with similar educational backgrounds.

Barriers to Participation

The first half of the analysis reflects the general interest and preferences of 82.9% of the older adults surveyed. At this point, it is significant to note the reasons 17.1% would not participate in any educational venture.

GRAPH V



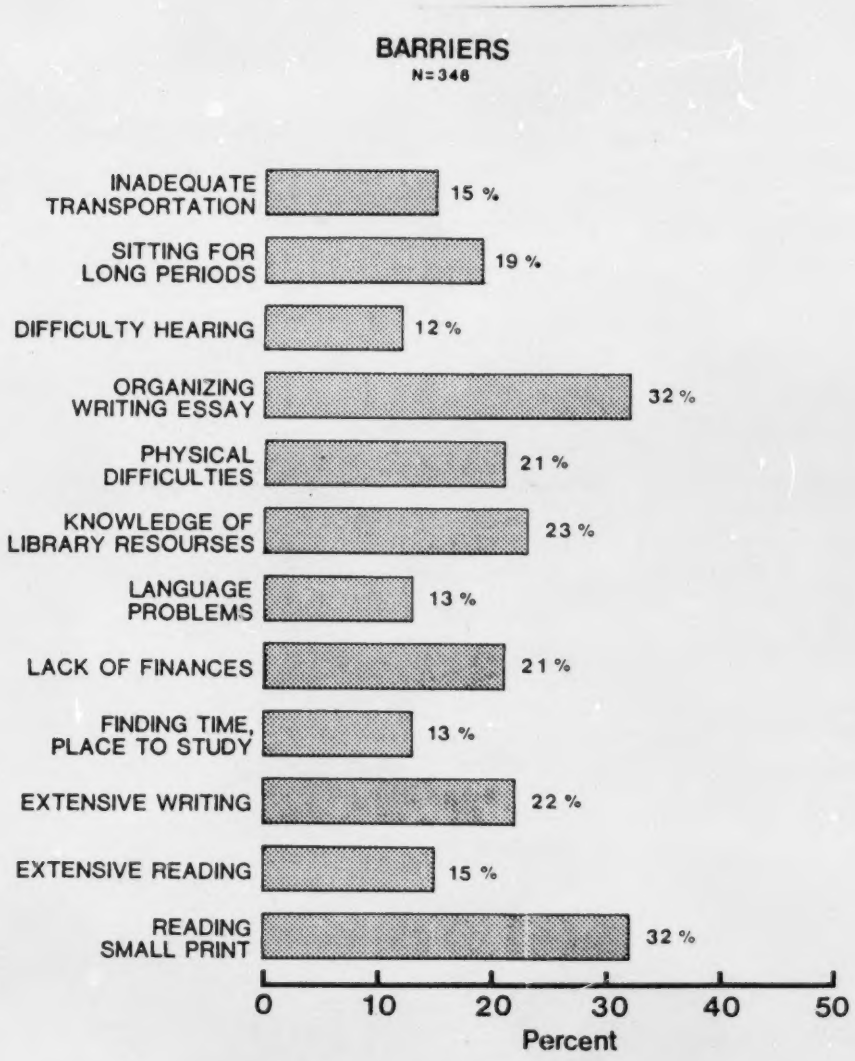
The four distinct reasons for lack of participation, as reflected in GRAPH V are no interest, physical limitations, not enough time and isolation. The survey did not include the response category "too old" and consequently, only eleven respondents gave this as a primary reason for no interest in education.

Questions 7, 7A and 8 (Appendix B) on the questionnaire were asked to those respondents that expressed no interest in any of the categories listed on GRAPH II and did not volunteer any additional categories of interest. After the respondents gave their most important reason for nonpartcipation, they were asked if they would pursue education if they could overcome their barriers. Only 1.4% of the 59 nonparticipants responded that they would continue educational interests if the barriers were removed.

Difficulties with Participation and Needed Support Services

In the previous section, barriers were highlighted by those with no present educational interests. GRAPH VI reflects the answers of respondents interested in education but perceive constraints or barriers that might hinder their participation. Respondents were presented with a list of barriers they might have and were asked to include any other barriers they perceived.

GRAPH VI



If asked in a workshop or classroom setting to organize and write an essay, over 31% of the respondents would need some kind of support service to help them with writing skills. This category drew the largest response to the survey question on barriers and is the only area where a substantial number of older adults indicated they would have difficulty. Transportation, a long time problem for the elderly and rurally isolated, was identified as a barrier by only 14.5%. Had the Interest Survey been conducted in rural area of the state, and respondents were 60 to 65 and older (instead of 50 and older), transportation would probably have been a more significant barrier to participating in educational programs. Other difficulties or barriers to participation that those surveyed listed included health or physical difficulties (20.8%) and knowledge of library and resources (23.4%). Respondents were given several barrier categories to choose from and could select as many barriers as they believed applicable and could volunteer other perceived barriers.

When asked what type of support services they would need to pursue educational goals, 18.8% indicated they would need transportation services which is only a slightly greater percentage than those who listed transportation as a barrier (14.5%). Perhaps given the option of driving their own car or having a university shuttle pick them up, more older adults would choose the shuttle. The support service requested most by the respondents was instruction on how to study. The 25.4% who listed this as a support service they would use most likely need the service to brush-up on learning skills they have not used in several years.

Although only 7% were looking for employment, 21.4% said they would use career counseling services if available through an educational institution. This could be due to the fact that older people are considering re-entering the labor market or considering a career change during later years, or need help because of underemployment. It appears that if educational institutions were to provide career counseling for older adults that a substantial number of older workers or job seekers would use that service.

As with all students, financial support is a necessity for educational endeavors by the older adult. Over 20% indicated they would need financial aid or scholarship money to help them pursue educational goals. It would be interesting to review current scholarship and financial aid practices at colleges and universities in Arkansas to determine the percentage of older students receiving financial support through scholarships, grants and loans.

Seniors as Resources in Education

Since there are growing numbers of senior citizens who are healthier and better educated in our country, educational institutions now have the opportunity to draw from this human resource, a pool of older instructors, administrators, and tutors who could be assets to postsecondary facilities.

Over 34% expressed an interest in teaching others the skills and knowledge they possess. The scope of interest and expertise is very broad with older adults desiring to teach in fields such as:

Aviation	Bible/Religion
Grammar	Life Insurance
Communications	Mechanics
Histology	Writing
Math	Nursing
Medicine	Stenciling
Reading	Cooking
Sewing	Business

The fact that over 100 older adults are willing to teach a variety of courses enables UALR to consider new programs and course offerings through the Division of Continuing Education. Perhaps older adults could teach courses to traditional students in areas not currently provided -- e.g., aviation -- or provide special group tutoring for students in grammar, writing or business. Others could organize short workshops for older students in health and medicine and develop seminars on life insurance or religion. Vocational-technical schools could bring older teachers to the classroom to provide students with expertise and counsel in the fields of business, aviation or mechanics.

There are countless possibilities for the inclusion of older teachers in the educational objectives of secondary and postsecondary institutions. The key question is whether or not these educational facilities will make the effort to bring older teachers into the classrooms and utilize the skills and knowledge that older people have acquired through years of experience.

SUMMARY
RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICY MODIFICATIONS

Policy makers that influence the educational objectives in Arkansas universities and colleges need to be made aware of the statistics borne out in this study, particularly the fact that almost 83 percent of older adults are interested in education and that only 26 percent are now participating. This disparity between who is participating and who wants to participate should be cooperatively addressed by university administrators, faculty, senior citizen groups, gerontological associations, and if needed, state legislators.

In order to modify current policies to be more responsive to older adults, policy makers should identify the specific areas of education that need to be changed and what affect those changes will bring to the administration and students. A long-range plan with goals that will bring about logical modifications would be useful, and reduce last-minute "crisis management" of university resources to adapt to the fast-growing market of older students and the slow growth of the traditional student market.

Administrators could initially focus on the problem at hand: an increasing older student market and a slow growth and even declining number of youth entering college. The question of equity in educational and financial benefits for all ages and all students (part time and full time) must be resolved so that older students have equal access to available resources in the university environment. Part time older learners are already increasing within the postsecondary educational system and the potential for even more senior students, part and full time have been documented by the study.

In light of the current federal and state budget reductions in education, university officials and senior citizen groups should work through public and private organizations and businesses within the community to obtain local resources and support for adult education and to assure cost-effective utilization of these available resources. Such local efforts could also be utilized in seeking national funding sources from the fields of gerontology, education and labor. This kind of cooperative effort at the community level can only benefit colleges and universities that face reduced government funding and a reduced youth market.

Policy makers ought to open the way for experimenting with or restructuring adult educational programs and opportunities using this study's results as a tool for structuring innovative learning or teaching programs for and by the elderly. Competency-based education leading to a bachelor's degree is one concept that has gained credibility in other areas of the country where the elderly population is lower than Arkansas. Perhaps a model competency-based education program, ELDERHOSTEL, weekday workshops and weekend seminars could be constructed and tested

within a university or community-setting if policy makers are willing to try new forms of adult education and new ways of utilizing older people who want to teach others.

The New Federalism has now placed the responsibility of many social and educational activities, once in the domain of government, into the hands of the private sector. Consequently, business should be encouraged to recognize this shift, and to support continuing education for older adult students, whether it be through subsidizing educational opportunities of their workforce -- i.e., scholarships or tuition payments in return for years of service with a corporation -- sponsoring new and innovative learning programs or providing in-kind services such as equipment, space for classes or "adjunct professors" from within their professional ranks.

Tuition can be paid by older students as long as they can be assured that they will receive quality instruction, or if tuition payments are lower than for traditional students, with the balance being paid by the corporations or through gifts to universities and colleges.

Adult education has grown steadily and dramatically; and this fact can be used to support efforts by university and college development offices and officers who can increase their contacts with corporate and family foundations for the purpose of supporting adult learning programs.

At the beginning of this report, several objectives, most of them hinging on sound statistical information, were listed. Although the information provided by the study pertains only to the Pulaski County area, it does provide professional educators with the statistical tools necessary to modify and expand current programs offered for older adult students. There is no doubt a large number of older residents in Pulaski County who are interested in all kinds of curriculum and degree offerings. Additionally, there are many residents that are interested in teaching others their own skills and areas of expertise. These two factors should make it apparent that there is (1) an older student market for educational programs which could be offered by the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in a variety of community settings; (2) that there is an educational resource pool within the community in the form of older adult teachers, tutors and administrators; and (3) the University of Arkansas at Little Rock has the opportunity to utilize the teaching skills of older adults in innovative ways for the benefit or older students and the general student population.

The study for Pulaski County also identifies the primary barriers to educational participation. If older adults are to be persuaded to participate, then financial resources and support services should be used as an incentive; modifying writing and essay requirements for courses and eliminating small print textbooks when it is possible would also encourage older students to stay active in educational pursuits. Where there are gaps in resources, university and local community agencies should combine their efforts to meet the resource needs in the most cost-effective manner.

The survey has provided the statistical analysis necessary to assist the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and other institutions in modifying their current continuing educational programs, and to make specific changes which are more responsive to the needs of the older student market in central Arkansas.

Specific recommendations for Arkansas postsecondary educational institutions, especially those in central Arkansas, include:

1. Providing more short-term courses and workshops on weekdays in community centers, churches, public schools and colleges, dealing with pre-retirement planning, communications, business, philosophy, religion and work-related skills. These courses could be for credit or non-credit and could utilize older teachers;

2. Providing vocational workshops, in cooperation with private industries, businesses and vocational technical schools; and placing older teachers in these institutions to teach or counsel students;

3. Recognizing that the primary reasons older people want to learn is for personal growth and development, meeting new people and to sharpen existing skills;

4. Providing support services equal to those services younger students have access to, and additional services tailored to older students. Such services include career counseling, financial aid, transportation and preparation for second careers;

5. Creating competency-review committees or boards to locate and screen potential teachers to verify their competency to teach courses of their choosing. The qualifications process should emphasize practical, present day abilities rather than degrees or other "paper" qualifications, especially for teachers in non-degree programs;

6. Increasing senior citizen's awareness of the Arkansas statute that provides for tuition-free learning opportunities for Arkansans 60 years and older and advocating the expansion of the law to provide credit for courses taken;

7. Supporting or sponsoring national educational programs for older citizens (such as ELDERHOSTEL) which have a proven record for effective administration and high participation among older students;

8. Brokering educational opportunities to the older student market by increasing publicity and public awareness campaigns;

9. Educating professors, teachers and assistants to the needs of older students, emphasizing the positive contributions they can make in the traditional classroom setting; and

10. Planning workshops and seminars for key staff -- e.g., financial aid officers, registrars and professors -- to increase their understanding of all aspects of older students and their abilities in education.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Academy for Educational Development. NEVER TOOK OLD TO LEARN: A REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE EDNA MCCONNELL CLARK FOUNDATION. New York: Academy for Educational Development, 1974.

Because of the growing need to further educate older Americans, the Academy for Educational Development conducted an "Educational Opportunities Offered by Postsecondary Institutions" survey. The study found that most institutions had no educational programs to serve the needs of this growing segment of older Americans.

Arguso, Victor M. LEARNING IN THE LATER YEARS: PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATIONAL GERONTOLOGY. New York: Academic Press, 1978.

Given the complexity of the subject and the research that has been done in the area, this book tells us the following things about learning in the later years:

1. The elderly seem to have lower generalized expectancies of success, which was observed as having an effect on task performance in particular and willingness to respond in general.

2. Performance increments were observed as an increasing function of associative strength. Performance of all subjects improve as tasks become more meaningful.

3. Research shows that as anticipation increases, elderly performance scores increase.

4. The elderly do much better under self-paced conditions than fast-paced conditions.

5. Evidence is very strong that the elderly don't learn in quantitative and/or qualitative terms within the equal time limits that young subjects do.

6. There are consistent findings that the elderly's performance reflects impairment under either input, storage, or output conditions when they are required to alternate attention or reorganize task materials.

7. Memory span studies testing primary memory show negligible differences in performance with age. However if the older person is required to alternate attention and reorganize material, then performance decreases.

8. Performance of the elderly have been observed to increase under auditory modiality; however, the older person does not appear to benefit more than younger persons under auditory mode presentation conditions.

9. Performance is observed to be an increasing function of the number and quality of retrieval cues present at recall in secondary memory tasks.

10. Older persons tend to benefit more from instructions to form and use mediators in the organization of information to be recalled.

11. The reduction of the variable anxiety leads to performance increases in both young and old.

12. Older people are more cautious, except in cases of monetary payoff.

Arguso continues that the age structure of our culture is changing for a number of reasons and that institutions of learning will have older students to serve. This situation is compounded by increasing technological changes that have the elderly intellectually deprived of new information.

Cross, Wilburn and Florio, Carol. YOU ARE NEVER TOO OLD TO LEARN. Academy for Educational Development, Inc., New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978.

YOU ARE NEVER TOO OLDER TO LEARN is about and for older persons who are interested in going to school and learning. It disputes myths about aging and elderly and encourages them to take advantage of the programs available. It discusses places of higher education and has a section on factors which elderly students need to know about.

Gilder, Jamison, editor. POLICIES FOR LIFELONG EDUCATION. American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, 1979.

This book is a report of the 1979 Assembly American Association of Community and Junior Colleges. Gilder addresses problems and frustrations that face lifelong education and gives recommendations and policies that could help to correct them.

Grabowski, Stanley M. and Mason, W. Dean, editors. LEARNING FOR AGING. Syracuse, New York: Adult Education Association of the U.S.A. and Eric Clearinghouse on Adult Education, 1974.

The focus of this book is on education for aging rather than education about aging. The editors designed the book to be a compilation of some of the recent literature and current practices in the field of aging. The literature collected deals with the fact that there is a rapid increase of the number of older adults in our population and that these adults have enormous educational needs.

Florio, Carol. COLLEGE PROGRAMS FOR OLDER ADULTS: A SUMMARY REPORT ON A 1976 SURVEY. Academy for Educational Development, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976.

In 1976 the Academy for Educational Development mailed questionnaires to the directors of continuing education or special programs at 816 colleges and universities across the country. Thirty-five percent or 286 of the institutions responded to the survey. Of the 286 institutions, 84% reported programs for older adults and another one percent had programs in the planning stage.

Enrollment. Because of the current data collection methods and educational statistical records, no one knows exactly how many adults 60 years of age and older are enrolled in courses sponsored by colleges and universities. The experience of 212 institutions that have kept enrollment data is that the older student enrollment has increased nearly 2600 percent during the five year period from 1970-71 to 1975-76. This amazing enrollment growth is attributed to four major factors:

1. Improved programs and an increased number of courses that meet the needs and interests of older adults:
   a. Short-term courses (6 to 10 weeks) once or twice a week;
   b. Cutting registration red tape;
   c. Holding classes in locations that are accessible to older adults;
   d. Scheduling classes for day time rather than night; and
   e. Including orientation workshops and counseling as a regular part of the program;
2. Effective publicity and recruiting methods;
3. Large social changes due to:
   a. Older and refined adults are healthier today than 20 years ago;
   b. Adults in general are going back to school in increasing numbers. Adults today are better educated than any previous group; and
   c. An awareness is growing in all segments of the population that the retired need options to the rocking chair
4. Only 15 percent of the survey respondents attributed their enrollment growth to the recent widespread availability of free or reduced tuition for older students.

Courses. The most popular academic courses were in the area of the humanities, accounting for nearly 41% of the academic subjects. Other popular academic subjects were literature, history and religion, psychology, creative courses, crafts, public information and education courses, and work-related courses.

Reissmon, Frank, editor. OLDER PERSONS UNUSED RESOURCES FOR UNMET NEEDS. Beverly Hills/London: Sage Publications, 1976.

This book is a series of articles written about older people and deals with education, aging, age prejudice, retirement, older women, federal help for the aged, volunteerism, etc. It attacks myths associated with aging with facts and figures. Reissmon points out that our present retirement system is inadequate and that it needs to be changed. Also, it tells how useful older persons can be, want to be, and need to be in our society.

Scanton, John Joseph. HOW TO PLAN A COLLEGE PROGRAM FOR OLDER PEOPLE. New York: Academy for Educational Development, 1978.

Based upon the experience of successful institutions providing educational programs for older students, Scanton prepared this manual to give advice and recommendations to others planning similar programs.

It is designed to help institutions know how to accomplish tapping the large and expanding reservoirs of older students while enrollment of traditional students are declining.

This study found that (1) although older Americans require a broad range of educational experiences to help them adjust to changing life situations, very few colleges and universities were making any effort to meet these needs and (2) that institutions experimenting in the field of continuing education for older people were eager to know that others were doing.

Stanhous, Naomi M. and Wisor, Norma J. "Life Options for Older Adults: A Concept and Issues Paper." Chicago, Illinois: The Chicago Community Trust, 1977.

This paper was written out of the experiences of the Chicago Community Trust for the purpose of focusing national discussion on the concepts of life options for older adults. It defines the concept of life options as an "action concept that both represents a recognition of a problem which older persons face and a strategy for ameliorating the problem." It discusses life options in the areas of education, employment, volunteer services for older persons.

Trent, Curtis and Melody Ann. "Education for Aging - Imperative for the Future," ADULT LEADERSHIP. (April, 1977), pages 231-233.

The Trent's article deals with the fact that the United States is rapidly becoming one of the world's older population centers and that it is imperative that the American education system, which has always focused its efforts on youth, must change

to meet the needs of this ever increasing older population. It has been estimated that by the year 2005 over one-half of our population will be over fifty years old. Older adults have many problems that education can help alleviate. Older adults have obstacles to overcome that hinder them from participating in educational programs although laboratory studies do show that the individual's primary ability to learn changes little with age. In spite of the fact that society in general is reluctant to establish educational opportunities for older adults, society does have a moral obligation to provide educational opportunities for all its citizens.

Vermilye, Dyckman W., Editor. LIFELONG LEARNERS - A NEW CLIENTELE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION. San Franciso: Jossey-Boss, 1974.

As a collection of writings on lifelong education, the editors take notice of the fact that higher education is out of step with the times and that learning needs, tasks, and clientele have changed. The book is divided into four parts. Part one discusses the fact that the wave of students created by the "baby boom" has passed and the enrollments are beginning to decline. Higher education needs to become more flexible, responsive, and relevant to the learning needs of people throughout their lives or they may find themselves withering away to their competitors as corporate educational programs and proprietary institutions are flourishing. There is a very large learning market of older students and they must be reached and served by higher education.

Parts two and three are concerned with specific and new programs that are tailored to the learning processes of a student body as diverse as the people they are to become.

Part four deals with affirmative action, tenure, and unionization as they relate to lifelong and higher education.

Weinstock, Ruth. THE GRAYING OF THE CAMPUS: A REPORT FROM EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES LABORATORY. Educational Facilities Laboratory, New York, 1978.

The book was written to show that the number of older persons in the United States is growing rapidly while the number of younger persons is decreasing, and that these older people are going back to college at increasingly large numbers because they have educational needs. It discusses the myths and truths about elderly people and comments that they are anything but a homogenous group. If educational institutions are to keep enrollments up, they must meet the challenge of attracting these older citizens. The book goes on to discuss the costs of programs for older persons.

APPENDIX B

EDUCATIONAL INTEREST SURVEY OF OLDER ADULTS

TELEPHONE SURVEY, 1981

Hello, my name is _____ from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. We are doing a survey to determine specific kinds of educational and training programs the University could develop. According to my survey guidelines, I am to speak to a male or female 50 years of age or older.

IF NO ONE AT RESIDENCE IS 50 OR OLDER: Ok, we need to limit our survey to those 50 or older. Thank you for your time. Goodbye. (HANG UP)

IF RESIDENT IS 50 OR OLDER: Ask to speak with them and repeat above.

IF RESPONDENT IS 50 OR OLDER: Your participation in this survey will help determine the kinds of programs adults would prefer, and your answers will be completely confidential.

(IF NOT): May I call back at a more convenient time? Get time, thank them and call back.

(IF YES): Go to Question 1

****

1. What is your educational background?	FREQUENCY
No formal education.....01	2
Some grammar school.....02	20
Completed grammar school.....03	11
Some junior high.....04	15
Completed junior high.....05	6
Some high school.....06	53
Completed high school.....07	74
Some vocational traning.....08	7
Completed specific vocational training....09	17
Some college.....10	77
College degree.....11	28
Some graduate work.....12	12
Graduate or professional degree.....13	22
	2 (Missing)

2. Are you, or have you been involved in any form of education or training program?

	FREQUENCIES
No.....01	254
Yes.....02	90
	2 (Missing)

IF YES, GO TO 2A.

2A. What kind of program was it?	FREQUENCIES NO	YES	Missing
a. College Class	317	15	14
b. Senior Center Course	330	1	15
c. Elderhostel	331	0	15
d. Church Program	313	15	18
e. Cooperative Extension Program	323	7	16
f. Adult Education Class	318	16	12
g. Other, (IF YES, LIST: _____)	274	67	5

3. Do you participate in any kind of leisure activity?	151	193	2

IF YES, GO TO 3A.

3A. What kind of leisure activity do you do most? LIST: _____

4. Did you know that UALR provides courses for older adults?	80	261	5

5. The following is a list of general education and training areas. As I mention each subject, tell me if the topic interests you.

a. SOCIOLOGY (Intro. to Sociology, Social Problems)	246	98	2
b. POLITICAL ISSUES (World Affairs, Government)	224	120	2
c. PRACTICAL LAW (Real Estate Law, Ethics and Law)	207	135	4
d. PRE-RETIREMENT PLANNING (Finances on Fixed Incomes)	181	159	6
e. COMMUNICATIONS (Public Speaking, Writing Workshops)	185	154	7
f. BUSINESS (General Business, Investments, Accounting)	179	160	7
g. ARTS AND CRAFTS (Pottery, Weaving, Woodcarving)	189	149	8

		FREQUENCIES		
		NO	YES	Missing
h.	FINE ARTS (Appreciation of Art or Music)	218	121	7
i.	ARTS PARTICIPATION (Drawing, Photography, Drama)	245	94	7
j.	PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION (Bible History, Ethics and Theology)	168	171	7
k.	BASIC SKILLS (Math Fundamentals, Writing, Reading)	204	133	9
l.	PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT (Positive Values, Grooming Habits)	167	168	11
m.	RECREATION AND EXERCISE (Square Dancing, Board Games, Golf)	153	182	11
n.	WORK RELATED SKILLS (Second Careers, Small Business)	189	149	8
o.	HOME SKILLS (Car Maintenance, Applicance Repair)	201	136	9
p.	HORTICULTURE (Indoor Gardening, Soil Testing)	186	150	10
q.	LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES (Beekeeping, Wine Tasting)	234	96	16
6.	Are you interested in any kind of educational program other than those I mentioned?	271	65	10

IF YES, GO TO 6A

6A. What is it you would like to learn?

LIST: _____

****NOTE: IF THERE IS NO INTEREST IN ANY CATEGORY FOR QUESTIONS 5 AND 6, ASK QUESTIONS 7 AND 8. OTHERWISE, GO TO QUESTION 9 AND COMPLETE SURVEY.

7.	As I mention each of the following categories, tell me if this might be a specific reason you are not interested in educational programs at this time?			
a.	Skills problem (Reading, Writing Studying)	322	10	14
b.	Physical limitations (Visual, Hearing, or Handicap)	314	21	11

		FREQUENCIES		
		NO	YES	Missing
c.	Isolated, travel a problem	313	19	14
d.	Cannot leave dependent or spouse alone	322	8	16
e.	Objections by family to participate	327	3	16
f.	Not enough time	311	19	16
g.	No interest	303	32	11
h.	Other (IF YES, LIST: _____)	313	11	22

7A. What is the most important reason why you are not interested at this time?

LIST: _____

8.	If there was a way you could overcome these problems would you like to pursue and educational program?	337	5	4

IF NO, GO TO QUESTIONS 18-25.
IF YES, GO TO QUESTION 9 AND COMPLETE SURVEY.

9. As I mention each of the following options, tell me if this would be a way you like to participate in an educational program. You can answer YES to as many options as you wish.

a.	A regular, full semester college course	265	52	29
b.	A regular, full semester high school course	278	35	33
c.	A short course or seminar, 1-3 days long	141	175	30
d.	A short course or workshop, 1-3 weekends long	178	136	32
e.	A summer course	233	81	32
f.	Elderhostel (National on-campus program for people 60+)	238	75	33
g.	A correspondence course (High school or college)	248	67	31
h.	A vocational workshop	189	124	33
i.	Radio, TV or newspaper course (Like Great Decisions)	252	62	32

		FREQUENCIES		
		NO	YES	Missing
10.	As I mention each of the following, tell me if it is an educational goal of yours at this time. Do you prefer:			
	a. Academic credit leading to an undergraduate degree?	256	59	31
	b. Academic credit leading to a graduate degree?	269	44	33
	c. Academic credit leading to a high school degree?	278	36	32
	d. Vocational certification in a specific skill?	217	95	34
	e. Academic credit to help sharpen skills, but no degree?	180	133	33
	f. Personal growth and development through education?	132	182	32
	g. Any other goals you have? (IF YES, LIST: _____)	286	20	40
11.	I am now going to list some types of locations at which educational programs are often held. As I read each one, indicate if you would desire attending a course at such a location.			
	a. A college or university campus such as UALR or Philander Smith	153	157	36
	b. A church or community center	136	174	36
	c. A public school or other public building	150	160	36
	d. A senior citizens' activity center	179	112	55
	e. Other location (IF YES, LIST _____)	275	21	50
	f. Is it not important where you attend?	199	83	64
12.	Many people would participate in an educational activity if they had some kind of support service to help them with their educational goals. As I mention each of the following, tell me if you would need this kind of support in order to pursue your interests in learning. Would you need:			
	a. Help with reading skills or using a reading clinic?	266	44	36
	b. Instruction on how to study, note taking, paper writing	222	88	36

		FREQUENCIES		
		NO	YES	Missing
c.	Help with basic writing skills?	250	60	36
d.	Career counseling?	236	74	36
e.	General personal or psychological counseling?	251	56	39
f.	Transportaion or car-pooling to get to a program?	243	65	38
g.	Financial assistance or scholarship money?	23[illegible]	72	38

13. What kind of people would you prefer to be in your class or training program?

a.	Those your age or younger	134	154	58
b.	Those that are only your age	202	87	57
c.	Those your age or older	164	121	61
d.	Is any age ok	117	181	48
e.	Those with any kind of educational background	154	138	54
f.	Those with similar educational backgrounds	119	164	63
g.	Those with less education than yourself	203	79	64
h.	Those with more education than yourself	152	131	63
i.	With friends or peers from your neighborhood or community	149	135	62

14. Could you more easily participate on weekdays or weekends?

Weekdays.....01	207	
Weekends.....02	87	
	52	(Missing)

14A. What time of day could you most easily participate?

Mornings.....01	157	
Afternoons.....02	58	
Evenings.....03	78	
	53	(Missing)

15. As I mention each of the following, tell me whether or not these might be your personal educational or training goals.

	FREQUENCIES		
	NO	YES	Missing
a. To help in your present job or career	210	95	41
b. To prepare you for a second career or another job	235	73	38
c. To help you re-enter the job market after long period of unemployment	262	44	40
d. To pursue a hobby or leisure time interest	133	172	41
e. To expand your horizons or sharpen your skills	119	187	40
f. To complete a college education	252	52	42
g. To complete a high school education	268	37	41
h. To meet interesting people	122	184	40
i. To become certified in a specific vocational skill	209	96	41

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16. There are various reasons why some people cannot start or complete educational goals. As I mention each of the following reasons, tell me if it is a reason that makes it difficult for you to participate in an educational program. Do you have difficulty with:

	NO	YES	Missing
a. Finding the time or place to study or work at home	264	44	38
b. Extensive writing (1½ hours or more at one time)	231	76	39
c. Extensive reading (50-75 pages or more each week)	257	51	38
d. Reading small print in textbooks	196	112	38
e. Lack of adequate transportation	257	50	39
f. Sitting in lectures or classrooms up to 1½ hours at one time)	240	66	40
g. Difficulty hearing lectures or classmates	267	41	38
h. Organizing or writing essays	195	110	41
i. Physical limitations	236	72	38
j. Knowing how to use a library or other resources	226	81	39
k. Language problems	262	45	39
l. Lack of finances	234	72	40
m. Other (IF YES, LIST: _____)	261	38	47

17. Would you be interested in teaching others the skills or knowledge you have?

	FREQUENCIES		
	NO	YES	Missing
IF YES GO TO 17A	195	112	39

17A. What skills or knowledge would you be interested in teaching to others?

LIST: _____

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

18. Is your age:

50-55.....01	86
56-60.....02	82
61-65.....03	64
66-70.....04	51
71 or older.....05	59
	4 (Missing)

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19. Are you:

Male.....01	123
Female.....02	222
	1 (Missing)

(USUALLY NOTED THROUGH OBSERVATION -- ASK ONLY IF UNCERTAIN)

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20. Your race or ethnic background is:

White.....01	284
Black.....02	55
American Indian.....03	1
Asian.....04	2
Hispanic.....05	0
Vietnamese.....06	0
Other.....07	2
	2 (Missing)

21. Are you currently employed?

	FREQUENCIES
No.....01	182
Yes.....02	157
	7 (Missing)

IF NO GO TO 21A.
IF YES GO TO 21B.

21A. Are you retired?

No.....01	208
Yes.....02	132
	6 (Missing)

IF NO GO TO 21C.
IF YES GO TO 22.

21B. Are you employed full time or part time?

Part time.....01	212
Full time.....02	126
	8 (Missing)

21C. Are you looking for employment?

No.....01	308
Yes.....02	7
	31 (Missing)

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22. What is your occupational background?

LIST: _____
(BE VERY SPECIFIC--BE SURE YOU CAN PICTURE WHAT THE PERSON DOES.)

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23. What is your present marital status?

Single.....01	13
Separated.....02	4
Divorced.....03	30
Widowed.....04	82
Married.....05	215
	2 (Missing)

24. For statistical purposes, is the combined yearly income of all members of your household?

FREQUENCIES

Less than $5,000.....01	42	
$5,000 to $9,999.....02	56	
$10,000 to $19,999.....03	86	
$20,000 to $29,999.....04	61	
$30,000 or more 05	69	
	32	(Missing)

THAT COMPLETES THE SURVEY--I APPRECIATE YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION. GOODBYE. (HANG UP)

Be sure to put phone number on your coding sheet.